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from the travellers Carlo Piaggia and Ambroise and Jules Poncet, who have pushed their researches across a portion of Central Africa hitherto unexplored, extending to 23° and 24° E. long., and to a little more than one degree north of the Equator. As these extreme points are not less, according to Petermann's map, than from 500 to 600 miles west of Lake Albert Nyanza of Baker, and as M. Piaggia obtained information of the existence of another vast interior lake lying on the Equator and extending from the south of it, an entirely new field for research is thus laid open to the enterprise of explorers, who will have to determine whether the streams issuing from this immense lake, and the adjacent region to the west of 25° E. long., do not flow from a watershed entirely separated from that of all the affluents of the Nile, and which sends its waters into the South Atlantic Ocean, and probably by the great river of Congo. I may add, that this is not the first information that geographers have received of the existence of another great equatorial lake to the west of the Albert Nyanza; but the accounts hitherto received have been more or less vague, and no European traveller has been so near to its shores as Carlo Piaggia. Much credit is due to the Marquis Antinori, himself a traveller in these regions, for adapting the itineraries of Piaggia to the positions established by English travellers, and publishing the results in the Bulletin of the newly-established Geographical Society of Italy.

With these few words of introduction, referring to some of the more important topics which are to come under your notice in the course of the session, I earnestly trust that the session now commenced may be one of as great interest as many of those which have preceded it.

The PRESIDENT, before calling upon the Secretary to read the first communication, said he was sure every person in the assembly would agree with him that they were greatly honoured by the presence of the Queen of the Netherlands, a lady who, accomplished in the highest sense of the word, took the deepest interest in the advance of Letters, Science, and Art.

He added that the announced programme of the proceedings for the evening would be a little deviated from, owing to his having most unexpectedly received a letter from the Foreign Office, enclosing letters from Livingstone himself, written to his friend, Dr. Seward, whom he still supposed to be Consul at Zanzibar. One of these letters would be read to the meeting.

The following letter of Dr. LIVINGSTONE's to Dr. Seward was read by Mr. Markham:—

“**MY DEAR SEWARD,** “**Town of Cazembe, 14th December, 1867.**

“One of Seyd ben Ali's men leaves this to-morrow to join his master in Buira. He and Hamees have letters from me to you: one of these, in the hands of Hamees, repeats an order for goods, which I sent by Magera Mafupi

[Bunduki] in February last. If Magera Mafupi's letter came to hand, then the goods would be sent before the present letter can reach you. I have more fear of the want of shoes than anything else. If you have any tracing paper I should like some; I lost a good deal in fording a river; some pencils and ink powder, if you can spare them, and an awl, and stick of sealing wax. I am going to Ujiji in two days, and think that I shall be able to send letters thence to Zanzibar sooner than my friends can reach it by Bagamoyo.

"Moero is one of a chain of lakes connected by a river having different names. When we got there I thought it well to look at Cazembe, of which the Portuguese have written much; but all the geographical information is contained in letters I have written, which I mean to send from Ujiji, and have no heart to 'repeat myself.'

"Affectionately yours,

"DAVID LIVINGSTONE."

The PRESIDENT said the letter added little to what had already been communicated to the public. Livingstone announced his intention, positively, to come out of Africa by Zanzibar. In his letters to Dr. Kirk he spoke of his good health, and in other letters to Dr. Seward, which were of a private nature, he also spoke of his good health, and of the difficulties he had overcome. All these details would be hereafter communicated to the Society, when we had received the despatches which Livingstone had prepared, and which would come across from Ujiji to Zanzibar.

Mr. Markham next read a letter from Mr. G. S. W. HAYWARD, who is now travelling, on behalf of the Society, in the countries near the North-Western frontiers of India:—

"SIR,

"Murree, Punjab, 15th August, 1868.

"I have much pleasure in informing you of my arrival here on my way to Central Asia: it has been my endeavour to be as expeditious as possible, and by travelling up country via Central India, instead of the usual route up the River Indus, have saved much time.

"According to the wishes expressed in Sir H. Rawlinson's Memorandum for my guidance, it was my intention to have endeavoured to penetrate into Badakshan from Peshawur, but having been seriously warned by the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab that, 'in attempting to proceed by this route, you will not only endanger your own life, but be likely to compromise the British Government,' I have abandoned the idea of going from Peshawur, and am now about starting for Cashmere, and thence to Yarkand without delay. This being the safer route under the present circumstances, by proceeding by it I hope eventually to be able to accomplish successfully the objects in view. I am convinced that there is little danger in Yarkand itself, to any one acting with ordinary precaution, even in the event of being discovered to be an Englishman. The greater difficulty will be in returning from Yarkand by the Pamir Steppe, exploring the Steppe and Badakshan, and coming through the difficult country lying between the Hindu Kush and the north-west frontier. But, as by the time I arrive at Yarkand I ought to be quite 'au fait' at keeping up the disguise I shall assume, I feel very confident of success.

"I beg to enclose a description of a route from Jellalabad to Turkestan, via Chitral and Badakshan, which is from information supplied to the Punjab Government by a Yarkandi merchant, and which may not be known to the Geographical Society. I have also made a rough sketch-map, showing the country and route alluded to, and hope eventually to be able to prove the correctness, or otherwise, of the route given, from personal observation. Should it be in my power during my travels to forward any reports, plans, or informa-